

A most Excellent Ballad of an Old man and his Wife :

Who in their great want and misery sought to their Children for succour, by whom they were disdain'd, and scornfully sent them away succourless, and Gods vengeance shewed on them for the same.

The tune is, Priscilla,



I was an old man with his poore wife,
in great distresse did fall,
They were so feeble with age Got lost,
they could not work at all:
A gallant Son they had,
which lived wealthily,
To him they went with a full intent
to ease their misery.
Alack and alas for woe,

A hundred miles when they had gone,
with many a weary step,
At length they saw their Sons fair house
which made their hearts to leap:
They sate them on the Green
their Hose and Shos to trim,
They put their hands about their necks,
against they should enter in.
Alack, &c.

Unto the Dore with trembling Joynts
When these Old couple came,
The Woman with a shaking hand,
the Old man blind and lame.
Full mannerly they knockt,
fearing for to offend,
At last their Son frowningly came,
unto them in the end,
Alack, &c.

God folks qd. he what would you have?
methinks you are too bold, (try
why get you not home to your own coun-
now you are lame and old?
With that they both reply'd,
with sorrow, care and grief,
Here are we come to thee our Son
for succour and reliefe,
Alack, &c.

This is thy father gentle Son,
and I thy loving Mother,
That brought thee up so tenderly,
and lov'd thee above all other:
I bore thee in this womb,
these breasts did nourish thee,
And as it chanc'd, I often danc'd
thee on my tender knee.
Alack, &c.

And humbly now we thee intreat
our dear and loving Son,
That you will doe for us in our age,
as we for you have done:
Now nay not so he said,
your suit is all in vain,
'Tis best for you I tell you true
to get you home again,
Alack, &c.

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The worlds not now as when I was
 al things are grown more dear, (born
 By charge of Children likewise is great,
 as plainly doth appear :
 The best that I can doe
 will hardly them maintain,
 Therefore I say be packing away,
 and get thee home again.
 Alack and alas for woe,

The Old man with his hat in hand,
 full many a Leg did make,
 The Woman wept and wrung her hands,
 and prayd for Christ his sake :
 Not so to send them back,
 distressed and undone,
 But let us lye in some Barn here by,
 quoth she my loving Son.
 Alack, &c.

By no means he would thereto consent,
 but sent them soon away,
 Quoth he you know the perill of the Law,
 if long time here you stay :
 The Stocks and the Whipping Post
 shall fall unto your share,
 Then take you heed, and with all speed
 to your Country repair.
 Alack, &c.

Away then went this wofull Old Man,
 full sad in heart and mind,
 With weeping tears his Wife did lament,
 their Son was so unkind :
 Thou wicked wretch quoth they,
 for this thy cruell deed,
 The Lord send thee as little pittie
 when thou dost stand in need,
 Alack. &c.

His Children hearing their Father set
 his Parents thus at naught,



In short time after to have his Land
 his death by subtle wrought :
 What cause have we quoth they
 more kindness to express,
 Then he unto his Parents did,
 in their great wretchednesse.
 Alack &c.

They murdered him in piteous sort,
 they weig'd not his intreats,
 The more he pray'd compassionately,
 the greater were his threats :
 Speak not to us, quoth they,
 for thou the death shall dye,
 And with that word with a Dagger & sword
 they mangled him monstrously,
 Alack, &c.

When they had got his Silver and Gold,
 according to their mind,
 They buried him in a stinking Ditch,
 where no man should him find :
 But now behold and see
 Gods vengeance on them all,
 To gain their Gold their Cousin came
 and slew them great and small,
 Alack, &c.

He came among them with a great Club,
 in dead time of the night,
 Pea two of the Sons he brained therewith,
 and taking of his flight,
 The Murderer taken was,
 and suffered for the same,
 Deserved for that cruelty,
 this vengeance upon them came.
 Alack and alas therefore,
 Alack and alas therefore.

FINIS.